

## **My patience is exhausted—**

**says Jim Arthur**

**continued...**

encouraged the worms to return. Precisely! Bingley was making the point emphatically in the early 1930s, advocating instead the use of lead arsenate. Now we use chlordane and this proves that earthworm control has been continuous in one form or another for 60 and more years.

### **Misguided**

Irrigation is another case of the advocacy of demonstrably misguided theories. Before the war, irrigation was limited by either the absence of any facilities or by restraints of men and time. Yet, I was advocating 40 years ago what was then old-fashioned, old-established practice—namely, that areas requiring water should be given individual treatment by hand-held open hose rather than leaving sprinklers on all night and flooding greens. This was long before pop-ups were being used, even in the States.

Mr Jones advocates, in my hearing, the use of pop-ups for long periods at widely spaced intervals, letting the greens dry out thoroughly before watering them again! Quite apart from the practical problem that if we apply once a week the total amount given in minimal daily irrigation then we shall be watering for 18 to 22 hours a day, when do we find time to play golf? Also, how do we get that amount of water to penetrate without flooding bunkers, how do we play a course with soggy bogs at the start of the week, drying out to rock-hard greens

at the end, and how do we get the water to penetrate such dry areas anyway?

All those who have given the matter thought will, I am sure, agree that we ought to aim at—even if we do not always succeed—producing fine-textured, wiry *Agrostis* and fine fescue turf if we are to play our traditional pitch and run-up game as opposed to target golf. Most, including many American superintendents, would agree that annual meadow grass is our main enemy, responsible for most greenkeeping problems. Mr Jones claims that, at one course he advises, while in response to gross sanding of greens, the grass is now 100 per cent annual meadow grass, which "does not matter."

I have never decried American greenkeeping—if it is kept to America. Equally, most of the traditional principles here would not transplant save for those few areas in the States where soil and climatic conditions are equivalent to those in Europe.

### **Pattern**

There has always been a cyclic pattern, since greenkeeping began, of 'farmers', who know all about growing the wrong grass, destroying our courses and their being brought back, from the very brink, laboriously by 'greenkeepers', only to be thrown out by members who want to see more grass on the course and extolling the 'beautifully lush' turf of

other ruined courses. But remember that the initial impetus for the establishment of the Board of Greenkeeping Research (as Bingley was known) came from Norman Hackett, who was advising Yorkshire courses in the early 1920s on exactly the same basic lines as I do today!

With Bingley now preaching the same gospel, backed by the Royal and Ancient, we could be thinking seriously of the feasibility of establishing an advisory body based there, with the same power and influence as the USGA's Green Section wields in the States.

Naturally, course conditions were not perfect by today's standards 50 to 80 years ago. Neither was household plumbing! But, by the standard then accepted, conditions were as good as the equipment could make them and better golfers were turning in scores as low as any today, playing on fine perennial grasses, not annual meadow grass, and using less efficient clubs and golf balls.

Even that pioneer of agricultural grassland research, Professor W.B. Stapledon at Aberystwyth, said in the 1930s: "I would rather putt on poor fescue greens than on lush annual meadow grass ones."

No one pretends that every course was in good condition then, not that we would accept for one moment today what, by their standards, was good presentation, even for a championship, before the war.

Lindrick's detailed records show a cyclic repetition of traditionalists unseating the farmers—who were at the root of all their problems—only for the farmers, in turn, to win in response to ignorant golfers demanding more grass on the course.

The swings and roundabouts still operate, invariably triggered off by some half-thought-out theories on the grounds that to be noticed one has to be outrageously different!

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required by

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Nickerson Turfmaster has developed a new range of sophisticated grass cutting machinery to meet the requirements of professional users.

Nickerson Turfmaster's 375 has a full 7ft cut, hydrostatic transmission plus a host of other features. The triple mower is powered by a Kubota 21½hp, three-cylinder, water-cooled diesel engine, giving the 375 more than adequate power to maintain a high work rate and fast transport speed.

Forward/reverse motion is controlled by a rocking foot pedal giving variable speed through hydrostatic transmission and the two-speed, front-wheel drive axle. When cutting, the machine is capable of operating at up to 7½mph and in the transport gear speed is variable up to 14½mph.

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The new Nickerson Turfmaster 375.

Braking is inherent within the hydrostatic transmission, but a hydraulically operated 8in diameter foot brake is also fitted together with a self-adjusting handbrake. For operator comfort, there's adjustable seating, controls to hand, hydraulic power steering and warning dials on the fascia.

The 375 is also available with a powerful 21½hp Kohler petrol two-cylinder air-cooled engine.

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The salary is negotiable.

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